



Our membership and services span the globe

10 N Post St Ste 305 | Spokane WA 99201-0705

Phone: 509.624.1158 | Fax: 509.623.1241

E-mail: nwma_info@nwma.org | Web: www.nwma.org

June 13, 2012

Ms. Lisa Jackson
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Mr. Dennis McLerran
Regional Administrator
EPA Region X
RA 140
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98101

Office of Environmental Information Docket
Mail Code 2822T
Docket # EPA-HQ-ORD-2012-0276
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Re: Request for 120-day Extension of the Public Comment Period for EPA's Draft "Assessment of Potential Mining Impacts on Salmon Ecosystems of Bristol Bay, Alaska"
Docket # EPA-HQ-ORD-2012-0276

Dear Ms. Jackson and Mr. McLerran:

The Northwest Mining Association (NWMA) hereby requests a 120-day extension of the public comment period for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) draft "*Assessment of Potential Mining Impacts on Salmon Ecosystems of Bristol Bay, Alaska*" (Draft Assessment) released by EPA on May 17, 2012. The current 60-day comment period is wholly inadequate for the public, including NWMA's members, to digest the information and provide meaningful input on the Draft Assessment and supporting documents.

The fact that EPA is assessing the potential impacts of a mine that hasn't even been proposed makes it difficult enough to formulate meaningful comments, but the three-volume Draft Assessment is more than 1,000 pages, and there are approximately 2,000 cited references not contained in the assessment. NWMA and its members need sufficient time to analyze and provide comment upon the information in the Draft Assessment as well as the cited references upon which EPA relied. NWMA requests that EPA provide all the cited reference, bibliography and source data materials on-line at the EPA's Bristol Bay website, as readily available on-line access to this information is crucial to develop meaningful comments.

Furthermore, the peer review panel tasked presumably to advise EPA on the sufficiency of the Draft Assessment will be meeting well past the current comment deadline of July 23, 2012. The public should have the opportunity to consider the information released by this panel in addition

to the Draft Assessment itself. Thus, the comment period should be extended at least 120 days, but no less than 60 days beyond the release of the panel's information.

NWMA is a 117 year old, 2,300 member, non-profit, non-partisan trade association based in Spokane, Washington. NWMA members reside in 44 states, including Alaska, and are actively involved in exploration and mining operations on public and private lands, especially in the west. Our diverse membership includes every facet of the mining industry including geology, exploration, mining, engineering, equipment manufacturing, technical services, and sales of equipment and supplies. NWMA's broad membership represents a true cross-section of the American mining community from small miners and exploration geologists to both junior and large mining companies. More than 90% of our members are small businesses or work for small businesses. Most of our members are individual citizens.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Laura Skaer".

Laura Skaer
Executive Director